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## REVIEW

First Three Books and Selections. Edited for the use of Schools, by J. R. Sitlington Sterrett. New York; American Book Co.

PART II. THE TEXT<sup>1</sup>

This edition is based on that of the Dutch scholars, van Leeuwen and Mendes da Costa, and is the first serious attempt to introduce into our secondary schools a conjectural instead of the traditional text of Homer.

Omitting minor details, such as case endings and forms, the most striking divergences from the traditional text are the attempted restoration of the digamma, the restoration of the augment, substitution of *κε* for *δν*, and the regular use of the dative plural ending *-σι*. My comments will be in regard to these changes.

In the Preface is this sentence: "It cannot be denied that the digamma was pronounced when the Iliad was composed". Yet it is denied by many of those best qualified to speak; cf. Cauer, *Grundfragen*, p. 63: "Die epischen Gesaenge sind in einer Mundart gedichtet die den Laut des Digamma nicht mehr besass"; Thumb, *Indogerm. Forsch.* 1898, p. 326: "Der Spirant in dem Gesantheimer der Alten keine Rolle mehr als lebender Laut gespielt" . . . "Das Zeichen Digamma in unsern Homer-ausgaben keinen Sinn hat" . . . "Auch für die aeltesten ionischen Dichter das Digamma kein lebender Laut mehr war". All these utterances occur in an exhaustive study devoted exclusively to Digamma. Solmsen in his *Laut- und Verslehre* continues the investigation and says, p. 171: "Digamma in der Epoche der Gesamtedaktion von Ilias und Odyssee auf ionischen Boden bereits verloren gegangen war". Ludwich, *Aristarch* 2. 287, expresses the doubt "ob das Digamma zur Zeit der Entstehung der Homerischen Gedichte ueberhaupt noch gesprochen wurde". To say a thing cannot be denied, when it is denied by such eminent scholars, is certainly misleading.

The very fact that the digamma is so easy to restore is the best possible proof of the integrity of the vulgate. Does it seem reasonable that anyone would have changed *καὶ φοῖκαδ'* of A 19 to *εὐδ' οἴκαδ'* to avoid the hiatus, then not have changed the *οὐ ἔθεν* of II 4 to *οὐχ ἔθεν* or have left *τέ ε* unchanged in 510? It is impossible to show here the important laws of position discovered for digamma by Hartel, laws discovered from the traditional text. Can it be assumed that the Alexandrians, or whoever they were, men who knew nothing of digamma, could have made the wholesale changes assumed in this edition, yet have kept their hands from initial digamma to such an extent that accurate laws could be discovered for this letter, laws depending on whether digamma falls in thesis or arsis? The

difficulties in teaching are not changed or removed by inserting this letter, since the student must be worried by the fact that *ἐπας* has no digamma in A 106, though fitted with one in 108. Suppose Aristarchus had changed the text in a manner similar to the changes in this edition: could even a Bentley have found traces of this lost letter? Two things seem to me reasonably certain in regard to Homeric digamma: first, it was a vanishing sound during the later stages of epic development, so that the poet could use either the inherited form with digamma or the living form without it; secondly, the vulgate has with fair accuracy preserved the evidence of the poet's use. The evidence for digamma at the time of the final formation of the Iliad is too weak to warrant us in the face of such a fact as *οὐ ἔθεν* in restoring it at the cost of radical alterations in the traditional text.

Another remark in the Preface is this: "Of pedagogical value, too, is the restoration of the augment, both syllabic and temporal, and the use of the sign for aphaeresis, where the syllabic augment cannot be restored". A thing has pedagogical value if it is in accord with the truth. The fact that false instruction is easy does not justify giving it. The attempt to restore the augment defeats itself; it is an easy matter to change *διαστήτην* of A 6 to *διεστήτην*, but *ἀνστήτην* of 305 and *κάππεσον* of 593 show how impossible it is to carry out the change. To write *βῆ* with the mark of aphaeresis, as if the syllable had been taken from the word, is to give the pupil an entirely wrong conception of the Greek augment; see Brugmann *Gr. Gram.* 307: "Die Praeteritalpartikel *e* war seit vorgriechischer Zeit kein notwendiger Zusatz zu der Verbalform, um die Vergangenheit zu bezeichnen. *e*-bherom und bherom bedeuteten beide 'ich trug'. Der Gebrauch des Augments bei Homer fakultativ war". In fact practically all grammatical writers speak of "the so-called loss of augment". Hence to teach *βῆ* is to ignore the development of the language. In order to carry this out, in part, since it cannot be applied everywhere, two fundamental rules of epic poetry must be violated; iteratives are augmented, as in A 491-493 *ῥωλέσκετο, ἐφθινύθεσ κε, ῥοθέσκε*, and the genitive ending in *-οιο* is elided, e. g. in A 381 *εὐξαμένοι, 485 ἡπειροί*.

There certainly ought to be some cogent necessity for such changes, and here it is: Dialect of Homer, § 170; "The omission of the augment must be regarded as aphaeresis, and occurs almost exclusively—

- (a) at the beginning of a verse;
- (b) after a caesura or the bucolic diaeresis;
- (c) after a vowel;
- (d) in words which without it would not fit the meter".

<sup>1</sup> See THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY, 2 188-190.

The exceptions in (a) and (b) cover every part of the verse but the beginning of the second, third, fourth and sixth feet. The beginning of the fourth foot is the forbidden diaeresis, so that is excluded, the sixth foot would be limited to dissyllabic verbs or verb forms with long penult, a very small class, so the exceptions practically include every place in the verse but two. Now these two are further restricted by "after a vowel" and "in words which without it would not fit the meter". This surely covers every possible case and there is nothing left on which to base an argument. You can insert in this rule in place of the words "The omission of the augment . . . occurs almost exclusively" this sentence, "Words beginning with a consonant occur almost exclusively at the beginning of a verse, after a caesura or bucolic diaeresis, after a vowel, in words which without it would not fit the meter". This argument is in truth no argument at all. Why is it that the messenger-speeches in tragedy omit the augment so frequently? Because of epic influence. This fact and because it is impossible to restore it in ἀνστήτην and κήππεσον should make one very cautious about restoring it elsewhere at the sacrifice of literary tradition and the most elementary principles of the Greek language.

In Dialect, § 170 f, we have "the omission of the temporal augment in the case of verbs which began with a long syllable was no fault of the poet, but of later writers, more especially Aristarchus". Such a statement as this deserves some definite proof; Lehrs says, Ar. 395 ff., "Aristarchus admitted no readings into the text for which there was not good manuscript authority". Ludwich has repeatedly restated this belief of Lehrs and added arguments of his own, not only in his Aristarchus, but also in his Homervulgata. In this he asserts that the vulgate can be traced centuries back of the Alexandrians.

In the Dialect of Homer 236 b, we read "Note incidentally that Homer uses κέ(κεν) in those cases in which we find ἄν in Attic". Yet ἄν is as surely Ionic as it is Attic. The vulgate gives no evidence of a general or systematic attempt to replace κέ with ἄν. In Pindar these two particles are used side by side about equally: then why must Homer be limited to κέ? Professor Sterrett himself says, Dialect 6, "The body of the poem is written in the old Ionic dialect". Why then remove the Ionic ἄν from this Ionic-Aeolic poem? Granted that the early Aeolic bards used only κέ, yet the language which took over these earlier songs and in which the Iliad was created had ἄν. The absence of this Ionic particle would destroy the main prop for the theory of the origin of these poems advanced by the author.

On the attempt to restore the dative plural σι

I will make two comments. XI 779 ἄ τε ξέλvois θέμυς ἐστίν cannot take the ending -σι without destroying the verse. Cf. also Drewitt, Classical Quarterly, 1908, 99: "It is interesting that in the one other type of monotomic scansion, viz., in lines resting on the hephthemimeral caesura alone, elision is absolutely rejected by the principal pause". This rule then makes impossible the elision assumed in this edition for B 249 Ἄρπετῶσα and establishes the vulgate reading.

In the Preface is this sentence: "such forms are contrary to the general laws of Greek, and occur only in the epic or in works borrowing epic forms". That they occur in the epic and not elsewhere surely is proof that they were not added from without, but are epic in origin; this might be a cogent reason for excluding them from other species of literature, but to exclude epic forms from epic poetry, because they are exclusively epic, is as reasonable as it would be to banish tragic diction from tragedy.

Professor Sommer in his thorough investigation of Wernicke's law, Glotta 1. 149, comes to this conclusion: "Ich ziehe es vor, an der Sprache Homers so wenig wie moeglich herumzudoktern, glaube ich doch die Erfahrung gemacht zu haben, dass man insgesamt bei konservativer Textbehandlung auch sprachgeschichtlich am weitesten kommt".

No student of Homer can fail to recognize the brilliant though erratic ingenuity of Payne Knight, van Leeuwen, and Mendes da Costa, but it is a far different matter to take their radical and often groundless conjectures and present them to beginners as assured facts.

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The second informal meeting of the New York Latin Club for this year took place on Saturday, April 17, at Packer Institute. The subject was Methods of Teaching Latin Prose Composition. Messrs. A. L. Janes of the Boys' High School, E. W. Given of Newark Academy, S. L. Cutler of the Morris High School and C. M. Baker of the Horace Mann School set forth in considerable detail their methods of handling the subject, while Mr. A. L. Hodges of the Wadleigh High School explained why the results were so poor, and Miss S. E. Van Wert of the Normal College detailed some of her experiences in visiting composition classes in English Schools.

Mr. Janes advocated very strongly the direct method of teaching. Out of an exercise containing twenty sentences five should be prepared at home and recited at dictation in class, the sentences being changed by the teacher so as to make it clear that the pupils had actually learned the principles. The pupil should also be expected to recite five sentences done yesterday in review, and five sentences done the previous day, so that the pupil should be ex-